DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 375 833 IR 055 170

AUTHOR Lyle, Jack W.
TITLE The Impact of Depository Documents in CD-ROM Format on Certain Academic Federal Depository Libraries in Indiana.
PUB DATE [94]
NOTE 11p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Libraries; Access to Information; *Depository Libraries; *Government Publications; Higher Education; *Information Dissemination; Library Research; *Optical Data Disks; Questionnaires; State Surveys
IDENTIFIERS Indiana

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study reported here was to investigate the impact of depository documents in CD-ROM format on academic federal depository libraries in Indiana. In the fall of 1992, a questionnaire was sent to all the federal academic depository libraries in Indiana. Topics covered in the questionnaire were the number of depository CD-ROMs received, their availability to the public, training of the staff, and levels of instruction given to the public in the use of these CD-ROMs. Based on the responses to the questionnaire, a dozen depository libraries in Indiana were selected to be visited. A more detailed list of questions was prepared including limits of use, location of CD-ROMs, and responses to new developments concerning CD-ROM technology. Analyses of the data indicated that: (1) most libraries dealt effectively with the CD-ROM format; (2) the number of depository CD-ROM titles received varied from three to all available; (3) over half of the libraries had not prepared their own user aids; and (4) instruction was given to patrons, but the quality of this instruction depended on the question, the patron, the knowledge of the staff, and how busy the staff were. Copies of the survey questionnaire and on-site questions are appended. (Contains 3 references.) (JLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 375 833

The Impact of Depository Documents in CD-ROM Format on Certain Academic Federal Depository Libraries

by Jack Lyle

IR055170

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Jack W. Lyle

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

The Impact of Depository Documents in CD-Rom Format on Certain Academic Federal Depository Libraries in Indiana

by Jack W. Lyle

ABSTRACT

The results of an investigation of the impact of depository documents in CD-ROM format on academic federal depository libraries in Indiana are reported. This investigation with special emphasis on installation of, training on, and use of CD-ROMs is based on survey instruments coupled with on-site visits.

The United States government places its documents free of charge in depository libraries throughout the country. This depository system allows the public easy access to federal documents. Each depository library is responsible for processing these documents and making them available to the public. With the exception of regional depositories, which receive all items, each depository library selects in advance of their being issued which series of documents it wishes to receive. Each series is called an item. Once a library has selected an item it continues to receive all documents in that series unless the library tells the government to drop it from its selection.

In the 1990s the United States government made available for selection more and more United States depository documents in CD-ROM format. Reading these documents required a complete workstation including personal computer, modem, and CD player. The public also expected to have a printer available. In addition to the cost for this equipment some of the depository CD-ROMs required the purchase of commercial software to make them readable. The expense of making depository documents in CD-ROM format available to the public was prohibitive for very small depository libraries and difficult for many depository libraries in times of financial retrenchment. Depository libraries experienced additional problems including access to and training in use of depository CD-ROMs.

Training in the use of depository CD-ROMs varied in the levels suggested in the periodical literature. In fact the highest level of service involved searching for the information and handing it to the patron rather than training. Michelle T. Ruhlin raised the questions on levels of service: "The question is, do we hand the patron the CD and say, 'Go for it.'... Do we sit down with the patron and <u>teach</u> them how to use EXTRACT or dBase?... Do we just find the information for them and hand them a floppy or printout with the answer?" (Ruhlin, p. 21)

In dealing with the multiplicity of depository CD-ROMs Robert E. Dugan and Anthony Cipriano suggested taking it one step at a time: "What is required is the commitment and perseverance

to overcome the technical and psychological barriers and get just one product running. A library may then expect that the resulting increase in user demand for access to additional electronic products will influence later decisions concerning allocation of resources to these information services." (Dugan, p. 353)

As regards the costs of the depository CD-ROMs to libraries Ridley R. Kessler indicated: "Most of the costs will be for hardware such as the basic computer and the cd player. If multiple access for multiple disks is desired the library would also have to purchase a cd tower and a local area network might have to be installed to connect several computers together to the system. Software costs would be required if the government cd-rom needs proprietary software to run them. If the programs for the government software are not sufficiently sophisticated, the library may have to buy commercial software packages to supplement that supplied by the agency." (Kessler, p. 29) He also mentioned the costs of maintenance and replacement of equipment, supplies such as paper and ink ribbons, and training of staff and patrons.

The academic depository libraries in Indiana ranging in size from small to large seemed representative of the academic depository libraries throughout the United States in attempting to meet the challenges created by the availability of more and more CD-ROMs in the depository program. In the Fall of 1992 a questionnaire (see Appendix A) was sent to all of the federal academic libraries in Indiana concerning the number of depository CD-ROMs received, their availability to the public, and training of the staff and levels of instruction given to the public in the use of these CD-ROMs.

Based on the answers to the questionnaire a dozen academic depository libraries in Indiana were selected to visit in the Spring of 1994. A more detailed list of questions (see Appendix B) was prepared for use during these visits. Libraries selected and visited were Ball State University, DePauw University, Huntington College, Indiana University at Bloomington, Indiana University at South Bend, Indiana University-Purdue University at Fort Wayne, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, Purdue University, University of Notre Dame, University of Southern Indiana, Valparaiso University, and Wabash College.

For the most part the libraries visited seemed to have dealt effectively with depository documents in CD-ROM format. The number of depository CD-ROM titles received varied from 3 to over 30 to all available. These CD-ROMs were made available to the public in one or more ways. Some were at a single workstation or at multiple workstations to be loaded on request or already loaded. Two libraries had them on a CD-ROM jukebox and two had them on a Local Area Network. Another library was planning to have a Local Area Network. Still another library planning a Local Area Network would not have the depository CD-ROMs available to the public until their LAN was completed. This library could not be included in most of the rest of the answers to the

questionnaire. Four of the libraries visited had patrons sign up for blocks of one half or one hour at the workstation. The other seven had no time restrictions.

The depository CD-ROMs were kept at the place where they were to be used. They were available from a reserve desk, a circulation desk, a documents desk, or in two cases split between reference and documents. For the most part the libraries visited kept the technical documentation with the CDs. However, in two cases the technical documentation was in the library systems office and in two cases it was in the documents stacks. There were some libraries where some of this documentation was kept in one place and some of it in another place including one library where a second copy was kept in the documents librarian's office.

Over half of the libraries had not prepared user aids of their own, but some had adapted other people's user aids. Where user aids had been prepared they were for National Trade Data Bank, National Economic, Social, and Environmental Data Bank, U.S. Code, OSHA, Congressional Record, or Census CDs. Whether the aids were original or not their preparation was undertaken by different librarians--most commonly documents librarians but also a reference librarian, a readers services librarian, and subject specialists.

Although instruction was given on all depository CD-ROMs available to the public, whether instruction was limited or thorough depended on the question, the patron, the knowledge of the staff, and how busy the staff were. The CD-ROM on which thorough instruction was most often given was the National Trade Data Bank. One library gave thorough instruction on National Economic, Social, and Environmental Data Bank, one on Occupational Outlook Handbook, and one on Statistical Abstract.

Most of the libraries visited did not provide the data from the CDs directly to the patron but rather had the patron use the CDs. However, one library had provided data for the administration, one had provided data from National Trade Data Bank, and one had provided information from the microdata that was not set up for public use.

Whether CD-ROMs circulated was split half and half with Tiger/Line being the most commonly circulated CDs. Four libraries circulated the manuals and seven did not.

None of the libraries visited had established a relationship with the campus computer center in connection with the depository CD-ROMs. The campus computer center did not have any depository CDs on cooperative agreement nor did it provide patron service for the difficult CDs.

When the depository CDs arrived about half the libraries visited had them installed by a librarian and about half by a technical person, although in two libraries some CDs were installed by one and some by the other. As to reviewing of the

technical documentation, it was reviewed by librarians in five libraries visited, by the library systems office in two, by a technical person in two, and not regularly reviewed in two.

Some libraries visited had resolved problems with the hardware; others needed to upgrade equipment. If more money were available, most would set up a Local Area Network. Others answered they would load the CDs on a campus network, get a jukebox, get more workstations, purchase more drives, get more technical staff, get a better printer, or have more training.

The current staff training was generally conducted by the documents librarian, although it was sometimes done by other librarians. It was either given to staff in the Documents area or in other areas where the CD-ROMs were located. Generally librarians and support staff were the ones trained, although five libraries also gave training to student assistants. All the staff were not trained at the same level of expertise. They were given more training on some CD-ROMs than on others. Which ones they were given the most training on varied, but National Trade Data Bank, National Economic, Social, and Environmental Data Bank, Occupational Outlook Handbook, and the Census CDs were most often mentioned.

Most of the libraries gave patron training beyond walk-in. Nine gave training by appointment. Six also gave training during classes in the library. Workshops to train patrons were not normally conducted or were at least a rarity.

Most of the documents librarians kept up with new developments concerning depository CD-ROMs and CD-ROM technology through list servers (especially GOVDOC-L), through the literature , and through personal contacts. One also had a minimal contact with the library systems office.

At the time of the visits a GOPHER was having little impact on the use of depository CD-ROMs. Several libraries didn't provide public access to GOPHER and some didn't have Internet access. One librarian did report going to GOPHER first for economic indicators and another reported being booted out of Internet so often that CD-ROMs were used more.

Thus most of the libraries visited had taken the depository CD-ROMs in stride. While these CD-ROMs had certainly made an impact, most of the libraries seemed to be moving forward with providing for their use by the public. Even those that had made less progress were developing plans for the future.

REFERENCES

Dugan, Robert E., and Anthony Cipriano. "Making It Happen in a Depository Library: Those Pesky CD-ROMs." Government Information Quarterly 10 (1993): 341-355.

Kessler, Ridley R., Jr. "White Paper on Depository Program Expenses for Libraries and Users." Documents to the People 20 (March 1992): 27-30.

Ruhlin, Michelle T. "The Gathering Storm: Government Information in CD-ROM Format." New Jersey Libraries 24 (Summer 1991): 18-21.

Appendix A

CD Survey

Name _____

Library _____

Institution _____

1. How many of the CD-Rom titles distributed by GPO does your library receive? _____

2. How are these depository CD-ROMs made available for public use?

   a. Not available to the public _____

   b. At a single workstation to be loaded on request _____

   c. On a CD-ROM jukebox or Local Area Network _____

   Please list the CD-ROM titles from c above:

3. What is your policy on the level of service provided to the public in the use of available depository CD-ROMs? (Mark all that apply)

   a. Thorough instruction in the use of some _____

   b. Limited instruction in the use of some _____

   c. No instruction in the use of some _____

4. Do you buy some commercial software for some depository CD-ROMs which require it? no _____ yes _____

   Please list the CD-ROM titles for which you purchased commercial software and the name of the commercial software purchased:

5. Who is trained in the use of the depository CD-ROMs? (Mark all that apply)

   a. Librarians _____

   b. Full-time Assistants _____

   c. Student Assistants _____

Comments:

Appendix B

On-Site Questions

Name:
Library:
Institution:

1. How many of the CD-ROM titles distributed by GPO does your library receive?:

2. How are these depository CD-ROMs made available to the Public?
a. Not available to the Public:
b. At a single workstation to be loaded on request:
c. On a CD-ROM jukebox:
d. On a Local Area Network:

3. Are there time limits or user restrictions?:

4. Where is technical documentation located?:

5. Where are the CD-ROMs kept?:

6. What user aids are prepared?:

a. Who prepares them?:

7. On which CD-ROMs are patrons given
a. thorough instruction ?:

b. limited instruction ?:

c. no instruction?:

8. On which CD-ROMs do you provide the data for the patron?:

9. Do CD-ROMs circulate?:
a. Do manuals circulate?:

10. What is your relationship to the campus computer center?:

a. Do they provide patron service for the difficult CD-ROMs?:

b. Do they have some CD-ROMs on cooperative agreement?:

11. Who installs your CD-ROMs when they arrive?
a. Librarian?:
b. Technical person?:
c. Who reviews the technical documentation?:

12. What problems do you have with the hardware?:

a. How would you improve this situation if more money were available?:

13. Who trains the staff in the use of depository CD-ROMs?:

a. Staff located in the Documents area of the building?:
b. Staff located in which other areas?:

14. Which staff are trained?
a. Librarians?:
b. Support Staff?:
c. Student Assistants?:

15. Are all staff trained to use the CD-ROMs at the same level of expertise?:
a. Are they given more training on some CD-ROMs than others?:
b. On which ones are they given the most training?:

16. What patron training is available beyond walk-in?
a. By appointment?:
b. Formal classes?:
c. Workshops?:

17. How does the Documents Librarian keep up with new developments concerning depository CD-ROMs and CD-ROM technology?
a. List servers?:
b. The literature?:
c. Personal contacts?:
d. The Systems office?:

18. What effect, if any, is a GOPHER having on the use of your depository CD-ROMs?: